

AOJS 2003

Several parts:

1. Nn and GR: models
2. religion and science as models: need to reconcile?
3. contradictory facts vs contradictory theories: statistical patterns: prayer etc
4. post-hoc arguments/models

Not really related to each other

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Angels: being with wings, Rambam: will of God.

blade of grass in wind: Angels, God's Will, force of wind

Morality: Atheist, Religionist, Buddhist (law of nature)

In science, particularly physics, models are useful as mnemonics, and as unifying, but mostly are considered 'valid' if they predict.

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Inertia:

Ancient model included observation/Nature + God: eg:

Aristotle etc: things stop unless pushed: spheres move continuously. direction of motion is conserved but spheres move in a circle □ they are celestial intelligent beings.

Rambam: Hashamayim mesaprim: allegory and literal:

Galileo: Inertia: speed is conserved, not only direction. Force causes change in one or the other or both:
 $F = ma$.

Explain orbit.

Aristotle/Rambam and Galileo/Nn two very different models of orbit. The latter allow for prediction, verification = scientific.

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Graph: trajectory has little info: eg line straight up can be motion at constant speed up, or up and down
w-line: straight line on graph (geodesic).

Accelerated motion is curved line.

These are 2 very different models of inertia.

No reason to argue, bec same predictions.

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Gravity:

Nn: $F = GMm/r^2$. caves etc. $1/r^2$ properties.

Aristotle: horses nearing stable go quicker (very different models).

Combine them: $a = F/m \rightarrow EP \rightarrow a = GM/r^2 \rightarrow$ acceleration field
very different model of gravitation, but same predictions.

No reason to argue, bec same predictions

Acceleration = curvature of w-line

w-line-curvature field
very different model of gravitation, same predictions

“*SWITCH*”: st is curved, w-line is geodesic:
very different model of gravitation, new predictions: for st curvature, and also maybe is space curvature, time warp etc.

led to this by taking EP seriously, maybe via precession etc. So need to know what can neglect and what is essential, or pointer to deeper level.

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Religious model of universe, “scientific” model.

Different religions; different paths in same religion.

My definition of Reform Judaism, making a spectrum.

Models and facts:

Minimalism: Joseph and brothers, Leibovitch, Percy Bridgman.

Statistics, prayer, and schar mitzvot: (file: “prayer, problem of evil”) different cause-effect models. Same predictions?

Post-facto model construction: apologetics and answers to philosophical questions: standard answers to problem of evil (and can use amputation or needle analogy to show that even a universe with all good may mean that there’s an evil God); none constitute proof of any sort etc. Scientific model gives predictions.

Sociobiology and religion re source of imperative towards ethical behavior

Bridgman, can’t prove could have been different. If wire brain and know all its processes....

we can’t control what happens to us – different ways to deal with it: seek happiness not in the outer but in the inner, etc. Pain is stimulus to growth etc. - it is interesting that all this can work, ie the ethical/higher consciousness way of life can be a good one:

Do we need to ‘reconcile’ science and religion?

Why assume that in a God-created universe they have to give the same predictions?

Do they really give different ‘predictions’?

Who even said there’s a problem? Eg Read Breishis as teleology rather than chronology

Re bayn odom lechavero: Objective morality vs god given: same result, different model?

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Can We Get What We Want?: Love and Prayer, Mitzvot and Pain

If we exercise every day, we are guaranteed (except in exceptional circumstances) to achieve muscle growth. Are we guaranteed that we will get what we want in love and in spiritual development? those who fail in this are simply not trying - this type of argument can make any claim impervious to disproof

- 1) universe purely naturalistic
- 2) The ultimate reality is spiritual

help us directly, personally, and detectably in the ways that we think we want to be helped, getting us what we want/asked for.

there does not seem to be any observable difference between a universe run by a God, even a compassionate God, and a universe which has no God.

God is Hidden: there will never be any real proof of the existence of God etc

a proof is a proof only if it is accepted as convincing by others, a “real proof” to me is a proof accepted by scientists, philosophers etc

Corollary to this: there will not be any statistical evidence of the efficacy of prayer or this worldly reward for mitzvot etc.

‘The God of the gaps’ science of history,

The effect of consciousness:

even though the ultimate reality is spiritual and prayer and mitzvot access this ultimate reality, prayer and mitzvot do NOT cause a non-naturalistic effect in the natural universe.

sages agreed with this view but wanted to encourage people to pray and do mitzvot and therefore deliberately fostered the impression that one CAN achieve one’s own agenda via prayer/mitzvot. (Just as (some) sages held that a ben sorer u’moreh never existed, but that the torah included it in order to frighten people away from behavior patterns that would lead to such a child.)

feeling of well-being , a sense of

if you ask for a specific thing and get it, it may be that this is a punishment eg getting that terrific job in the WTC beginning on September 10.

if one prays for something there is a greater likelihood of obtaining it.

not (at least in the scientifically measurable sense) a self-serving physical-reality-affecting mechanism.

- prayer helps develop an awareness of, and relationship with, God, and develop the belief, feeling, confidence, that everything that happens is part of a plan; this is comforting. The fervor of prayer can lead to a connection, and the concentration on the words and intents can help develop the belief that it is all for the good, that eventually one will understand why it is all happening (either in this life or in the afterlife), and that God cares and is aware of your suffering and loves you and etc. The connection that is established is valuable in of itself, as any deep relationship, but it also can help one achieve the perspective from which to view events and suffering, whether one’s own or that of others.
- One can even pray to God that one should have the strength to bear the suffering, that one should be able to draw closer rather than farther etc – this expression of desiring to be closer can cause us to get closer, as in relationships with people.

- Also, by elevating the spiritual level of the universe, the path of history continues on a preferred course to what it otherwise would have been – but there is no guarantee that this preferred course of events involves less pain.
- Perhaps we can develop ourselves sufficiently so that we want what God sends our way, and just as whatever happens is God's Will, it becomes our will too, and so by definition we get what we pray for. But although all can theoretically obtain this high a level, realistically it is a level that will be reached only by the very few.
- Prayer and good deeds (besides affecting the universe in the spiritual plane of existence in a deep way) can help defocus one from one's self and focus on others and on a greater picture. Seeing events in this way can help in developing relationships with others and oneself, and in diminishing one's ego, and reduce the impulse to see the universe (or even a relationship) as a platform for the realization of one's desires and ambitions and needs; as a result prayer and good deeds can help us accept what occurs, including the personally painful.

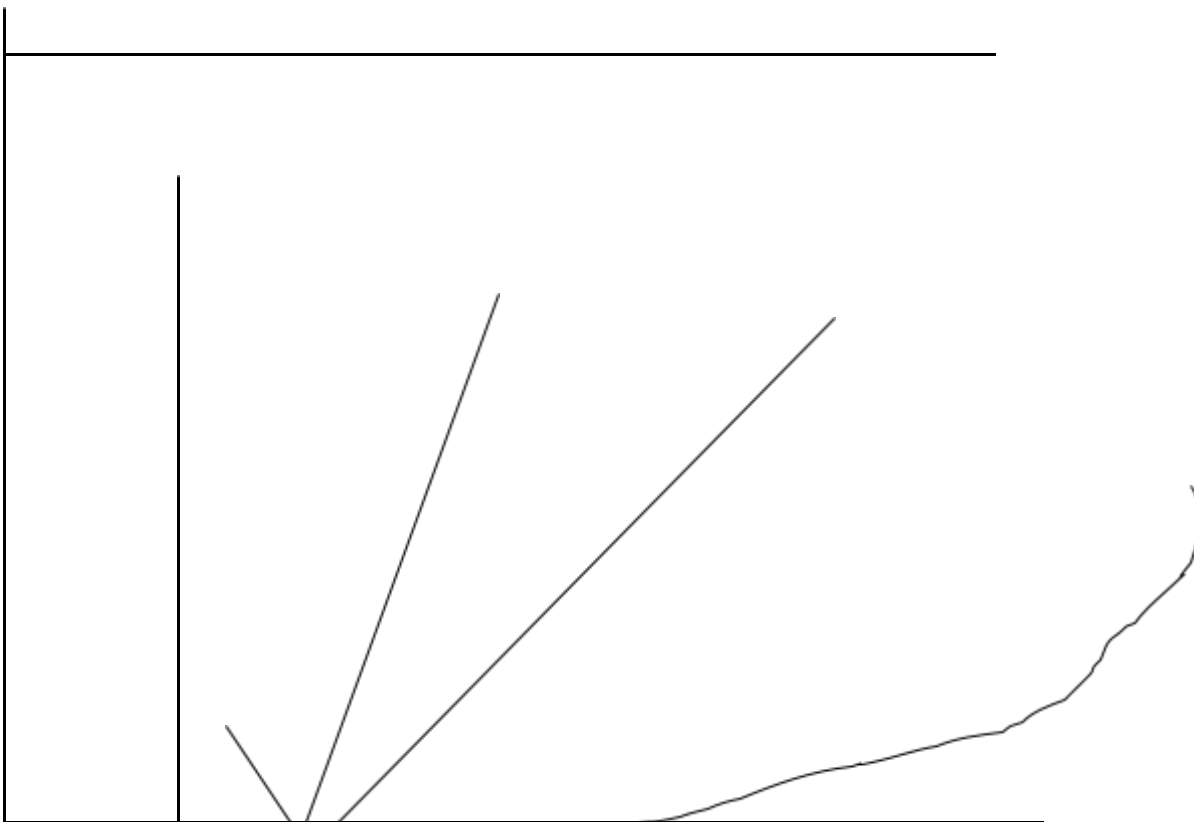
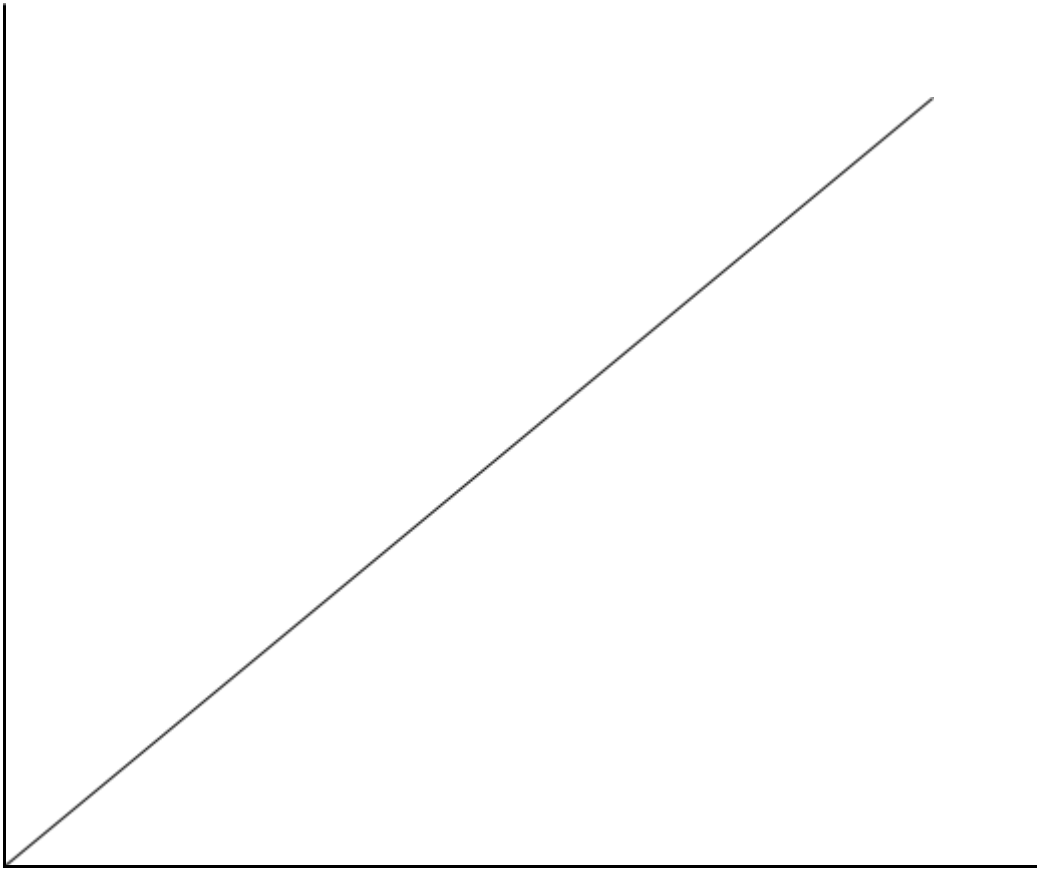
Bad things happen to good people, as made so very clear in the Biblical book of Iyov (Job). So no one can ever assume that a "bad thing" is a punishment; maybe the person is so holy and perfect that God is directing challenges to them as with Iyov, or as with Abraham and the sacrifice of his beloved son Isaac, maybe to have them bear some burden for the rest of the world, or for their descendants. Pain is not necessarily a punishment, it can be a gift in order to bring about growth. But it is not usually an appreciated gift.

Is there more good or bad in the universe, is it better that a person was created, with all the suffering involved, or not? A poll of the bet midrash as recorded in the Talmud records the impression of the majority that existence is not convenient overall.

God will send our way whatever it is that God decides is needed, and praying to God to do what God wants to do is absurd, since of course God does what God wants to do. God will not send our way what we want if it is different than what God wants¹. We can however develop ourselves to want what God wants and therefore to accept with joy whatever comes our way. And of course as we grow, what God wants for us can change. For example, if we become stronger and more highly-developed, we may be able to bear higher levels of pain and so greater challenges will be sent to us as a result of our growth.

¹ **Gods Will vs God's Preference**

Everything is God's will; it was God's will that Hitler kill 6 million Jews. Certainly God is stronger than Hitler., if it was not God's will it could not have happened, so saying that it is God's will is meaningless. And saying it to a victim of an accident or crime or painful experience is not only meaningless it is heartless. The question is what was God's preference? What would God have preferred that should occur under the circumstances? If we have tragedy, this was God's will, yes, but perhaps the point is that it could also have been different, and to some degree this is up to us perhaps.



$$F = m_{\text{inertial}} a$$

$$a = F/m_{\text{inertial}}$$

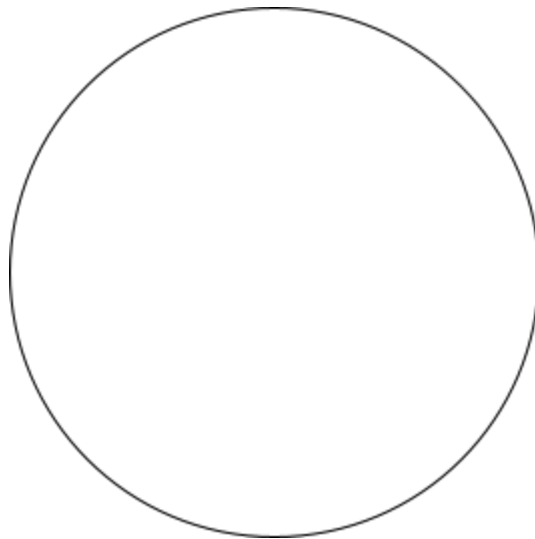
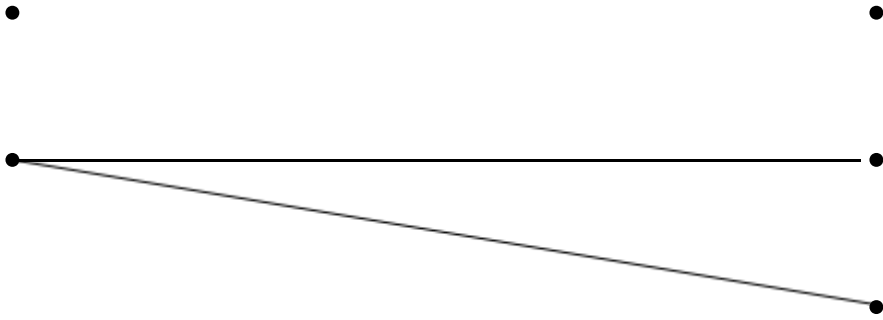
$$F_{\text{grav}} = G M_{\text{grav}} m_{\text{grav}}/r^2$$

combining these \square

$$a_{\text{grav}} = F_{\text{grav}}/m_{\text{inertial}}$$

$$= G M_{\text{grav}} m_{\text{grav}}/r^2/m_{\text{inertial}}$$

$$= [m_{\text{grav}}/m_{\text{inertial}}] G M_{\text{grav}}/r^2$$



$$a_{\text{grav}} = \text{connection} \\ \text{curvature} = G M_{\text{grav}}/r^2$$

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